The Vertuous
WIFE
Is the Glory of her Husband:
OR,

A Good Woman in her proper Colours.

Shewing at large the rare Endowments, Excellent Qualities, that are as Ornaments and Jewels, which bedeck the Breast of the truly Vertuous Woman.

Also Ten Characters, or rare Jewels, hanging in the Crown of the Vertuous Wife, who is the Glory of her Husband, the Honour of her Age, the Mirrour of her Sex, the best earthly Portion in the World.

Likewise many Examples; as well Modern, as Divine, Queens, Princes, and Ladies, eminent for vertue and goodness.

Lastly, a few Counsels to all young Men to be wary in their Choice, if ever they would obain that portion of portions, and incomparable Jewel, the Good Wife.

Pro. 31. 30. Favour is deceitful, & beauty vain, but the woman that fears God shall be praised.

By L. P. A well-wisher of all good women.

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BIBL. BODLEIANA

COurteous Reader, I here preſent unto thy view, a true deſcription and character of a Vertuous Wife, ſet forth in her proper colours. Perhaps thou mayeſt wonder that I would undertake to write any thing in the defence of that Sex, which many have ſpent their railing diſcourſes againſt: the more need therefore there is, that ſomething appear in print for the juſtifying of thoſe whom ſo many condemn: dare you ſay (becauſe ſo many appear to be bad) that none are good? Examples in all ages, and in the worſt of times, do at large declare, Famous Monuments of vertue, wiſdom, & of all graces to be ſeen in Women. Becauſe ſome are wantons, dare you ſay all are unchaſt? Though there be ſome counterfeit Gold, ſo there is ſome true Gold: and though ſome men happen on a wicked diſſolute Woman, yet all do not ſo. Some thrive by throwing the Dice. As there is droſs, ſo there is ſome Jewels: as there is Gall, ſo there is ſome Honey. Therefore condemn not all for one, but be adviſed to be wary in thy choice: and be not afraid to lye in the graſs, becauſe a Snake lyeth there. Men are not afraid to go to Sea, becauſe ſome men are drowned at Sea; neither are men afraid to go to bed, becauſe ſome men dye in their beds; ſo be not afraid to marry, becauſe ſome men have ill fortune by marriage.

But behold this Book, and ſee the lively character of the Vertuous Wife, drawn to the life. A Vertuous Woman is a good mans portion. Endeavour after vertue thy ſelf, and in time thou mayeſt find to thy happy content the rare Jewel, called, A good Wife, *which are the hearty wiſhes of the Author;*

L. P.

LO here the matchleſs pattern of a wife,
In vertue clad, ſet forth unto the life;
For good behaviour, modeſty, and wit,
And other graces which her mind beſit:
A perfect wife, a vertuous comely Dame,
A Vertuous Woman is ſhe call'd by name:
He that enjoys her hath all worldly good,
A bleſſed portion cloath'd in fleſh and blood.
He hath got himſelf a pattern for his life,
More than a woman, better than a wife.
Beauty affords content but to the eye,
Honour illuſtrates what it cometh nigh.
Theſe are but complements, 'tis inward worth,
That only ſets a vertuous woman forth.
Go vertuous dame, and ſhew thy inward grace,
Thy outward carriage, geſture, wit, and face:
That he who ſees thee, may wiſh 'twere his fate,
To live and dye with ſuch a vertuous Mate.

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good *portion* for good men,

OR,

A Vertuous Woman a Good Man's Portion.

Many Daughters have done vertuously, but thou excellest them all,

IF Men that have been remarkably vertuous, & patterns for piety, & all other graces, Histories, as well modern as Divine, have very largely discoursed of: and infinite of examples of all Ages and Generations do in abundance witness the same. Yet should I recount them all, they can never exceed the Piety and Vertue which I have read of in Women, who have been famous for all vertues.

I shall therefore in the first place endeavour to lay before you the Character of a Vertuous Wife, in nine or ten particulars: and then leave a few Counsels and wholsome Rules for the practice of young men, to attain the subject, called, The Vertuous Wife.

1. The first Character of a good wife, is this: She is one that hath the fear of God before her eyes, though the Daughters of Zion be haughty, and go with a stiff neck, and all their actions bespeak their Pride: the vertuous wife will endeavour in all things to keep a conscience void of offence both toward God and toward man: though others can sin with a high hand, and commit iniquities with greedinesse, she dares not, will not disobey God, for fear of that wrath & judgement that is denounced against all those who break his commands, but she walks not as a fool but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil: so in hopes of that recompence of reward promised to the obedient, she perseveres to the end in every good work, and will not, though to gain a world, let the fear of man over-sway, and over-ballance that fear of God which is always, and upon every account before her eyes.

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2. The second Character of a Vertuous wife, is this; she'l endeavour to live in love with, and subjection to her own Husband: she's not ready to render railing for railing and back-biting for back-biting, but follows the example of vertuous Sarah, who obeyed Abraham, and called him *Lord*: Though her husband be a daily temptation to her, and a great provocation to stir up wrath in her, yet she's equally ballanced, and will love in the midst of envy: she by her vertue will conquer all difficulties, and throw down all temptations which might arise in her spirit, to the doing of any evil, or to the commiting of any revenge; but is ready to render good for evil, love for hatred, she is far from the spirit of revenge, she is resolved to live in love, as Christ hath loved her, and given himself for her: she resolves to accompany her Master every where, even at such a time when his Disciples left him: as the Love of God remains sure, so shall her love and subjection remain to the end, in the midst of all opposition: and in this she is the admiration of all, and a rare pattern as well as a good portion for good men.

3. The third Character of a Vertuous wife, is: she is one who is cloathed with the garment

garment of humility, 1 Pet. 3. 3. whose adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of plating the hair, or wearing of gold, or puting on apparel, but had rather let it be the hidden man of the heart, even the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit, which being in the sight of God, of great price, she desires to be cloathed with it, she desires to be found in a humble frame of spirit before the Lord, knowing the contrite and humble spirit the Lord will not despise: and this is a godly ornament in a womans breast, and is accompanied with great renown: for while some lofty looks cannot endure the sight of a poor wretch, the woman adorned with humility, will out of the vertuous inclination of her spirit, endure to be serviceable in her place & generation, and shew her piety even to poverty: she visits the poor, and refreshes the bowels of the needy, and her Christian prudence is set before her eyes, to make every thing seem reasonable that is aged by her; Humility is a comely ornament in a Womans breast.

4. She is one who hath learned the Rare Jewel, and incomparable Art of a Christian contentment: come riches or poverty, liberty or restraint, honour or dishonour, life or death, come what will come, she hath learn'd

in

ery estate to be content: hath God sent
a wicked husband, a man of Belial, a man
contentious spirit & froward dispositi-
; she by the help of God is resolved to live
subjection to him, and therefore is ready
give a good example, and grows better, &
s sin is a whetstone to her grace, and a me-
cine for her security: in this she is the glo-
of her sex, and the mirrour of her age, for
ough others have their dainties & delight:
content is her best dish; in the want of all
thly comfort and enjoyments, she can sit
wn with content, and say with the Psal-
ist; The Lord is my portion, therefore I
shall not want. She knows that discontent
s a viper in the breast, that spits venom in
he face of God, therefore resolves in her self
hinder the over-spreading of this freting
prosie in her soul, and so continually keeps
er spirit in an humble frame, not in any
hing extolling her own worth or deserts.

5. A fifth Character of a vertuous wife, is
Patience: hath she crosses either inward or
outward, she is resolved to let patience have
its perfect work: A hasty froward spirit is
contemned by her, she had rather follow the
example of Job, then of Jobs wife, though her
body be afflicted, her mind distempered, and
she be continually surrounded with sorrow,

yet

yet will she wait upon God patiently all her appointed time, until her change come. And this grace is an enemy to all hasty and rash spirits, with grief of spirit and trouble of heart it is; which when she considers that daring speech of Job's Wife to her husband, when she bad him curse God and dye, for enduring those afflictions from the hand of God, she would not for a world tempt the Lords patience so much, by forgetting her own duty, and work of patience in her soul.

6. A Vertuous wife is a Map of sobriety and modesty. Stubbornness & obstinacy are hearbs that grow not in her garden; her pride is only to be cleanly, and her thrift is not to be prodigal: she scorns the company of tatling gossips, and is more seen than heard: in her face and gesture, and in all actions, you may read nothing but vertue.

Birth, Beauty, Wealth, unless with grace mixt,
Are too poor things for generous hearts to fix;
Sobriety, and Modesty in one,
Are Jewels rare which grace the head alone.

7. She is very careful of her Domestick charge. Though wantons & careless housewives are gadding abroad, and wantonizing among their Companions, and care not

which

which end goes foremost at home, yet the vertuous woman, out of the generousness of her spirit, is resolved to be a pattern to all women, and will be so diligent in her domestick charge, that no one shall have the least cause to cast any aspersion upon her: she will be very careful to provide things necessary for her family, in this she is resolved to preserve her reputation unspotted: for what ever private employment she hath of her own she is careful, first about her houshold charge to see if every thing be done in due order: shewing herself in all things a pattern for good housewives, and is likewise an honour to her husband.

8. She is of a pleasing and sweet disposition, she hates the humours and ill qualities of those pouting Dames, who think that the best behaviour, which is accompanied with pride and majesty. Now the vertuous will know no difference between the Knight and the Beggar, the Lord and the Peasant, but will be very courteous to all, that he who runs may Read vertue in all her Actions.

9. A vertuous wife is accompanied with Chastity and Courtesie, which two godly qualities Reduce a Woman into a perfect temper: the praises of Chastity are innumerable. Daphne resisting the woing of Apollo

was

was turned into a Lawrel, after which he always wore a Lawrel in his hat, to testifie his Love:

10. A vertuous wife wears prudence and discretion in all her actions: beauty makes them but humane, but prudence makes them more like divine: if beauty wins them love, prudence makes them worthy of admiration When Theseus was exposed to the Mercato, in the Labyrinth; who furnished him with means for his delivery, but by the discretion and prudence of the princess whom he served, else he had never been disintangled from those intricate windings. When Jason was to serve as a prey to the furious Bulls that kept the Fleece, was it not Medea that enchanted them, and made the passage free unto the Prince, to carry that away which none durst enterprize.

In a word, the man that enjoys her, hath a happy portion, & hath great cause to bless God for his infinite goodness, for sending him such a comfort, as a good Wife, who for her vertue can parallel, whose greatest learning is religion: dishonesty never comes nearer than her ears: she hath content in her own, and seeks not a husband but finds the gods of her husband is the husband

…ations: she doth nothing more than love …n, she is made up of goodness.

And as she's good, she likewise is discreet,
All heavenly graces in her breast do meet:
A soul, a body, not a soul alone;
Goodness, and wit, and beauty all in one.
All pride fast bound in chains behind her lies,
Foul lust and envy from her presence flies:
And on her breast in Golden Letters write,
Mans best beloved, and most chiefest delight.
He that in's choice doth meet with such a wife,
May well rejoyce all the days of his life.

Histories make mention of women famous for all vertues, amongst whom let's not forget the merit of memory, our late Illustrious Queen Elizabeth, of happy memory, who was a Saba for her wisdom, a warlike Amazon for her magnanimity, a Cleopatra for her bounty, and a Camelia for her chastity: all men have spoken too little, no man can speak too much: sacred be still her memory to us on earth, as her blessed Soul lives ever blessed in Heaven.

…here succeeded (though not an absolute …rchy) yet a Princess of unspotted …, incomparable Clemency, and unmatchable

matchable goodnels, & most remarkable vertue) Queen Ann, whom all degrées honoured, all nations loved, and no tongue was ever heard to aſperſe with the leaſt calumny, and by whom none had ever the leaſt cauſe of ſorrow, unleſs in the lamentable loſs of ſo grave & gracious a Princeſs. And amongſt famous women, let's not forget the late hopful Lady, the Lady Elizabeth, who for all princely vertues was the mirrour of her age & the glory of our nation! of Ladies renowned for chaſtity and other vertues, whole volumes are filled with Lucretia, being adulterated by Sextua Tarquinus, after ſhe had ſent to her friends to acquaint them with her injuries, becauſe ſhe would not live to be a by-word to Rome, and preſerve a defiled body for ſo noble a husband, with a knife which ſhe had hid under her garment, ſtabbed her ſelf before them all. Likewiſe of women eminent for conjugal love unto their Husbands, I have red of one Pandorus, who had a beautiful young wife, to whom he was ardently affected: She on a time earneſtly deſired him to forbear all Conflicts with the enemy, to endanger both himſelf and her to ruine; but he by no means would hearken to her entreaties, which cauſed her to beg of him before he went to end her fears,

and

[illegible] transpierce her body with his Sword, which he denyed, and went out to the Battel: But at the first Onset, the whole Army was overthrown, and himself stain, and his beautiful Wife immediately took captive, and carried to the King: whose great Beauty much astonied him: insomuch that after a short time he desired her in marriage, which she put off with all possible delays: insomuch that he resolved to attain that by compulsion, which he could not by perswasion: which coming to her ears, she retired in private by her self, and wrote these words, and left them upon the Table: (Let none report, that the wife of Pandorus harboured so little love as to out-live him.) And then she immediately took a Knife and pierced her self.

Thus having given you in brief the true Character of a truly vertuous Wife in her Ornaments most richly deckt, and for her Graces for ever be admired, I shall now give a few counsels to the honest young men of this Age, to be wary in their choice, to see that they be careful to chuse such as are thus qualified: for as there are good and vertuous women, so to the contrary, there are [illegible] that are a shame to their Sex, a

dishonour to their Parents, and the like troubles of a Family: therefore young men whenever you find a woman cloathed with all the Ornaments of vertue, bless God for it, and take her as a rich jewel, a princely Portion, lent you to improve to your good and his glory.

1. Be careful young men in your choice, because on it depends one great part of your welfare here on earth: without this, all your joys will be mixt with abundance of sorrow. What is a greater cause of comfort and joy here on earth than a vertuous wife, she is a comfort of Youth, the staff of Age, a Jewel, a Crown, an Ornament to her Husband: Therefore young men be wary, as ever you would have joy and comfort in this World, let it not be enough that beauty adorns her face, but see that vertue adorns her actions: for the proverb may oft prove true: Under a fair face, may be hid a false heart: Thou canst not be too cautious in this thy choice: therefore be as wary as thou canst.

2. The second counsel I would give young men, is this: As I would have you look into qualities and conditions, so enquire after the life and conversation of her Parents. If the

parents be vertuous, they will endeavor (near as possible to train up their children the way they should go, that when they are old they may not depart from it. This (may, though not always sure, yet it is the sure way thou canst go. Mark diligently, and inquire after her behaviour, see that she be vertuous, wise, & kind, such a wife will make thee a happy man, and thy life shall be a comfort, which otherwise would be a burthen to thee, therefore account of her as the only treasure thou enjoyest upon the earth, & the rarest Jewel that ever thou didst or shall enjoy in this world.

3. Thule one that is vertuous, because she loketh well to the ways of her houshold, and eateth not the bread of idleness. A vertuous Wife is a credit to her Husband. See the wisest of men, even Solomon his commendation of a vertuous Woman; in the last Chap. of the Prov. from ver. 10. to the end: Who can find a vertuous Woman? For her price is far above Rubies. The Heart of her Husband can safely trust in her, so that she shall have no need of spoil, she will do him good and not evil all the days of her life: she seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her Hands: she is like the Merchants

ſhip, ſhe bringeth food from afar. She ariſeth alſo while it is night, and giveth meat to her houſhold, and a portion to her maidens. She conſidereth a field & buyeth it, with the fruit of her hand ſhe planteth a Vineyard. She girdeth her loyns with ſtrength, and ſtrengtheneth her arms. She conceiveth her merchandiſe is good, and her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the ſpindle, and her hands hold the diſtaff. She ſtretcheth forth her hands to the poor, yea ſhe ſtretcheth forth her hand to the needy. She is not afraid of the ſnow, for all her Houſhold are cloathed with ſcarlet: ſhe maketh herſelf coverings of tapeſtery, her cloathing is ſilk and purple: her husband is known in the gates, when he ſitteth among the Elders of the Land. She maketh fine linnen and ſelleth it, and deliv'reth girdles to the merchant. Strength and honour are her cloathing, and ſhe ſhall rejoyce in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wiſdom, and in her Tongue is the Law of kindneſs. She looketh well to the ways of her houſhold and eateth not the bread of idleneſs. Her children ariſe up and call her bleſſed, her husband alſo, and he praiſeth her. Many Daughters have done vertuouſly, but thou excelleſt them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, ſhe ſhall

be

praised. Give her of the Fruit of her
ands, and let her own works praise her in
the Gates. Here is Solomons Sanblom of a
vertuous wife at large described. Be cau-
tious then in your choice, and lay this as a
pattern before your eyes; as ever you would
be happily here, and blessed hereafter:
Endeavour to find the Subject insisted on,
The vertuous Wife.

So shall your life
a blessed end procure,
A blessing come by such a wife,
that ever shall endure.

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ing of a small Price, are Printed for, and sold by *Thomas Passinger*, at the Three Bibles on the middle of *London-Bridge*.

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